

Town of Lincoln

Budget Board Meeting

April 1, 2009

Members Present:

Ken Booth Roberta Gosselin Carl Brunetti Hagop Jawharjian Sheila Chisholm

Greg Leonard Linda Noble Claudette Lussier Cheryl Ethier

Members Absent:

Joe Renning Bob Ericson

The meeting began at 7:35 with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Town Administrator and Finance Director were present to discuss their recommended budget.

The Town Administrator's recommended School Budget was discussed.

It was noted that any resolutions for the budget should have clear intent so that the way they are handled is not based solely upon interpretation.

Medicaid reimbursement projections were discussed.

The Governor's revised budget was discussed, and the fact that it

could be worse than first predicted, including additional money for pension reform.

Class size and personnel were discussed.

Health insurance co-shares were discussed, and there are major differences between the sectors because of different unions and collective bargaining.

The State revisions to the budget was once again discussed, with regard to timing because the changes may only pass once the Financial Town Meeting has already occurred and so the budgeting done by the Budget Board may have to be based more on the local appropriation portion until they know what will happen in which case they could perhaps have an additional Financial Town Meeting

The Finance Director distributed municipal property tax and revenue projections.

For property taxes, it was noted that even in the best of times, tax collection should be accounted for at approximately 98%.

For revenues, it was noted that looking at last years' revenues at the same point in the year, this years' are much lower.

The possibility of having a public informational meeting once the Budget Board had voted upon their recommended budget was discussed.

The Financial Town Meeting was discussed, including whether or not it should be booked at C.C.R.I to start rather than the High School since there is a large turnout expected.

If the meeting were held at C.C.R.I there would have to be a live feed that allows visitors to view the meeting from a separate location, and it was suggested that this might be fulfilled by having Cox Communications air the meeting live on the local access channel.

The Town Administrator and Finance Director adjourned from the meeting.

The Budget Board discussed the School Budget, including personnel, transportation, Special Education, etc.

The Budget Board discussed the \$517,000 resolution from last year's Financial Town Meeting that will be rolled into next years' budget as revenue because it was not expended.

The Budget Board also discussed what would constitute a maintenance of effort for the school budget, and whether it could be based upon local appropriation only.

The Budget Board discussed whether or not to recommend the number submitted by the Town Administrator, and also whether or not from a legal standpoint that would be legally a maintenance of effort.

The Budget Board discussed areas where they felt some funding could be adjusted based upon historical information, and the total of these adjustments, which would affect mainly salaries and purchased services, was \$1,669,053.

Linda Noble made a motion, seconded by Hagop Jawharjian, that the bottom line budget provided by the Budget Board to the School Committee, could possibly be adjusted by over \$1.5 million from their original recommendation in order to maintain the philosophy of minimizing any tax increase.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The Budget Board discussed the effects of wage freezes versus layoffs in the school budget.

Wage freezes would mean employees would still receive step increases and longevity, but at the previous rate and not the increased rate.

The Budget Board discussed the possibility of making a recommendation that all employees accept a wage freeze, which would include municipal employees, contracted school employees and administration.

Greg Leonard made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Carl Brunetti.

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 pm.